

Only Air Guard unit flying F-22s

On page 2: "State of the State" Briefing

Guard Raptor pilots take to the skies for the first time during drill weekend

There is a new warrior defending the Virginia skies at Langley Air Force Base, especially on weekends. Pilots from the Virginia Guard's 192nd Fighter Wing took to the sky in state-of-the-art F-22 Raptors for the first time during a drill weekend, May 17.

Pilots from the 192nd have been training in and flying the F-22s for some time, but this was the first time they flew as part of their normal drill weekend operations.

Across a backdrop of blue skies, Lt. Col. William J. Butz, took the first F-22 wheels off the ground, making history for the 192nd. A total of 4 F-22s and an F-16 took to the air for dissimilar combat tactics training.

After an hour, the aircraft returned to base. Disembarking from his aircraft, Butz' smile stretched from ear to ear, "It was a great feeling," he said. "Three years of training on the F-22, and the move from Richmond was long, but worth it. We have closed another chapter and we are moving on to better and brighter things, and I am happy to be a part of it."

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/may2008/raptordrill.html>



Virginia Air National Guard pilots flew the F-22 Raptor for the first time during normal drill weekend operations at Langley Air Force Base May 17.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Combat Sustainment Support Battalion participates in lane reversal exercise

More than 140 Virginia Guard Soldiers from the Virginia Beach-based 529th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion partnered May 11 with Virginia state agencies to conduct a two-hour emergency exercise to test state agencies' ability to reverse interstate traffic on I-64 between Richmond and Hampton Roads.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/may2008/lanereversal.html>

Virginia Guard Caucus visits Fort Pickett

Five members of the Virginia General Assembly's Guard Caucus toured Fort Pickett May 13 and saw first hand many of the capabilities of the Maneuver Training Center.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/may2008/guardcaucusvisit.html>

Fredericksburg holds Freedom Salute

A Company, 116th Brigade Special Troops Battalion conducted a Freedom Salute ceremony at the Virginia Army Guard Armory in Fredericksburg, Va., on May 18 to honor the unit's service in Iraq from March 2007 to February 2008.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/may2008/a116bstbfreedomsalute.html>

Winchester Star: Guard breaks ground on new armory in Frederick County

The Virginia Guard's new armory in Frederick County will more than triple the space of the existing armory on Millwood Avenue in Winchester. Local, state, and federal officials welcomed the advent of the new facility May 19 during a ground breaking ceremony at the site.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/may2008/winchestergroundbreaking.html>

Mark Your Calendars!

May 26: Memorial Day Ceremony

The Virginia War Memorial will hold a ceremony at 11 a.m. at 621 S. Belvidere Street in Richmond. For more information call 804.786.2060

May 27: Asian Pacific Heritage Observance

The Virginia National Guard Equal Opportunity Office will host an Asian Pacific American heritage observance at 11 a.m. at the State Military Reservation. For more information, contact Capt. Allen at 804-236-6596.

June 6: D-Day Anniversary

The National D-Day Memorial in Bedford will host a ceremony at 11 a.m. to honor the 64th Anniversary of the D-Day invasion.

Adjutant General briefs "State of the State" to Guard Bureau

Significant increases in the Virginia Army National Guard's end strength and the successful deployment and return of Soldiers from the Staunton-based 116th Brigade Combat Team were just two of the major accomplishments highlighted during the Virginia Guard's "State of the State" brief to National Guard Bureau.

Maj. Gen. Robert B. Newman, the Adjutant General of Virginia, delivered the briefing to Maj. Gen. James W. Nuttall, Deputy Director of the Army National Guard, at the National Guard Readiness Center in Alexandria May 21. In addition to reviewing the Virginia Army Guard's major accomplishments over the last year, Newman also thanked Guard Bureau for the resources provided in order to make those accomplishments possible. He also shared some of the Virginia Army Guard's goals and priorities for the upcoming year.

The Virginia Army National Guard recently celebrated having an end-of-month strength of more than 8,000 Soldiers, the first time this has happened in 14 years. This number is a dramatic improvement over the end strength of 6,847 in December 2005.

Newman credited the recruiting and retention success to the resourcing provided by Guard Bureau and focus from senior leaders in the Virginia Guard. Continued funding from Guard Bureau is critical for success, Newman said. He also asked for funding to increase the number of "storefront" recruiting locations from six to nine.

The Virginia Guard's Suicide Prevention Program is one of the top priorities for the coming year, Newman said. He quoted Army statistics stating suicide rates have increased 20 percent since 2006, and 41 percent of those were in the National Guard. Virginia's plan is to have at least one full time Soldier or Airman from each of the Virginia Guard's major subordinate commands attend suicide prevention training, and then bring back that information to share with the leaders of their unit. Newman asked Guard Bureau for funding in order to have a full time position devoted to suicide prevention in order to give the program the attention and priority it deserves.

The Virginia Guard is also looking to improve its infrastructure in Northern Virginia, Newman said. Right now, the Virginia Army National Guard has three locations at Fort Belvoir, Leesburg and Manassas, but would like to increase those locations in order to increase the number of units stationed in the Northern Virginia area.

Additional facilities would increase the Virginia Guard's ability to respond in the event of a threat situation in the National Capital Region, and it would also allow for recruiting more members into the Guard, Newman said. The Northern Virginia area has great potential for recruiting, but there needs to be units where the Soldiers and Airmen can serve.

Newman applauded the efforts of the Virginia National Guard on their efforts to mobilize the 116th BCT for the troop surge in Iraq in 2007, and he thanked Guard Bureau for the support they provided. In a span of just over four months, 116th units from around the state were able to mobilize for service in Iraq, and most



Maj. Gen. Robert B. Newman, Jr., the Adjutant General of Virginia, delivered the "State of the State" brief to National Guard Bureau May 21. The briefing outlined the significant accomplishments of the Virginia Army Guard over the last year and goals for the coming year.

of them have returned home.

Newman asked Guard bureau for a funding increase for mobilizations scheduled for this year, to include funds to improved dental readiness for deploying Soldiers. Dental readiness is one of the most common issues Soldiers and Airmen encounter as they prepare for mobilization, and additional funding would help increase a unit's ability to prepare the members early in the mobilization process.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/may2008/sotsbrief.html>

MORE ON THE WEB

Department of Defense Asian Pacific Heritage Month

<http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/Asianpacific/asianpacific04/>

National D-Day Memorial

<http://www.dday.org/>

National Guard Bureau

<http://www.ngb.army.mil/default.aspx>

Virginia General Assembly

<http://legis.state.va.us/>

Virginia War Memorial

<http://www.vawarmemorial.org/>

Langley Air Force Base

<http://www.langley.af.mil/>